

Anti-Slavery Office,

New York, 24 April, 1865.

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Dear Garrison,

Since you think it desirable to have at our Anniversary a colored speaker <sup>also</sup> and a woman, why not take Frances Harper Watkins, who embodies in herself both qualifications? The thought strikes me pleasantly. She probably inclines rather to the side of Phillips, but she has nothing of his spirit, and I think she would do herself and the Society credit.

The more I think of it, the more clear it seems to me that those of us who are for dissolution should not take it for granted that we are to be voted down, thus letting the question



Go as it were by default. On the  
contrary, let us fill our ~~mouths~~<sup>mouths</sup> with  
arguments and trust as far as we  
can in the good sense—the sober  
second thought—of the members of the  
Society. We may be outvoted, but  
I have strong hopes that the Society  
will, after all, vote to dissolve. Much  
will depend upon the wisdom ~~and~~  
we show on our side. And here,  
dear Garrison, let me speak frankly  
to you on one point. I think it would  
be wise for you, in the business meet-  
ings, to call Quincy to the chair, so  
that you may be perfectly free to  
take part in the debates. You will  
inevitably hurt our cause if you  
make speeches while in the chair,  
and the temptation to do so, when  
the questions are so personal to



yourself, and your mind is under strong excitement, will be almost irresistible. In doing we have a chairman friendly to us, but whose fairness will not be impeached by the other side; and I think it especially important that you should not be hampered by the duty of presiding and speaking at the same time.

In regard to the <sup>public</sup> Anniversary, it seems to me very important, first, that you should offer a series of resolutions, such as you think the occasion requires, and which would make a fitting ending of the Society's operations. They need <sup>not</sup> be either long or numerous, but they should be clear and emphatic, and be in themselves a justification of the proposal to dissolve.

Then I think you should deliver a carefully prepared address,



reviewing the past, and frankly stating  
the reasons why you think the Society  
may with propriety be dissolved.  
Both in the address and resolutions,  
pray be careful to make it clear  
that in dissolving we do not withdraw  
ourselves from any work that needs  
to be done for the protection of the  
rights of the colored people. The strength  
of our opponents lies in cunningly ma-  
king a false issue at this point.

If Phillips carries a majority  
with him, we shall be widely criti-  
cised and perhaps harshly denounced  
afterwards. I therefore desire that  
your address and resolutions may  
be a vindication of yourself and  
friends, so complete, that we shall  
not be tempted to further contro-  
versy.

Forgive me, dear Garrison, for  
thus "striking your pure mind of way



of remembrance" of the things that so  
deeply concern us all.

Mary Anne joins me in ~~the~~  
love for yourself and family.

Yours, faithfully,

Oliver Johnson.

